

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-49 (Cancelled)

¹ ~~50~~. (Previously presented): Structure providing access to an area beneath a floor, said structure comprising:

a segment of a floor having an upper surface and an opening therethrough;

a floor covering on said upper surface of said floor segment;

an access panel providing access to said area through said opening, said access panel including a floor frame located in the opening and a lid supported on the frame, said frame including a support flange extending therearound, said support flange being disposed so as to extend outwardly from the frame between the floor covering and the upper surface of the floor segment.

² ~~51~~. (Previously presented): Structure as set forth in claim ~~50~~¹, wherein the flange includes a ramped edge.

³ ~~52~~. (Previously presented): Structure set forth in claim ~~50~~¹, wherein the flange comprises two abutting parts formed from respective different materials.

⁴ ~~53~~. (Currently amended): ~~An access panel for~~ Structure providing access through an opening in a floor segment comprising an access, ~~said~~ panel including a rigid structural frame and a lid for closing an aperture in said frame, said frame including a tapered, outwardly extending, floor covering underlying flange having a thickness which tapers substantially uniformly over a distance of at least 10 times the maximum thickness of the flange and a floor covering overlying said flange.

⁵ ~~54~~. (Previously presented): Structure providing access to an area beneath a floor as set forth in claim ~~50~~¹, wherein said frame is rigid and has an outer edge, and said flange is

tapered, formed from a soft non-structural material and disposed in outwardly extending relationship relative to said outer edge.

⁶~~55~~. (Previously presented): Structure as set forth in claim ⁵~~54~~, wherein the flange is formed from a flexible polymeric material and attached to an upper portion of the outer edge.

⁷~~56~~. (Previously presented): Structure as set forth in claim ⁵~~54~~, wherein the flange is separate from the outer edge and includes a step portion arranged to mate with a complementary mating portion located at an upper portion of said outer edge.

⁸~~57~~. (Previously presented): Structure as set forth in claim ¹~~50~~, wherein said frame includes a central, lid closable aperture and an upstanding rib which extends around said aperture, said rib being disposed between a peripheral edge of the flange and the aperture and being arranged and located such that the same does not project above a level down to which a floor covering on the floor around the frame would crush under normal usage loads.

⁹~~58~~. (Currently amended): Structure A floor structure including a floor segment and an access panel as set forth in claim ⁴~~53~~, wherein said access panel is supported by the floor segment, the materials and construction of said frame and said lid being such that the load bearing capacities thereof are not substantially less than that of the floor segment.

¹⁰~~59~~. (Previously presented): Structure as set forth in claim ⁸~~57~~, wherein the lid comprises a rigid structural panel having a flexible overmoulding.

¹¹~~60~~. (Currently amended): An access panel as set forth in claim 53 for providing access through an opening in a floor segment, said panel including a rigid structural frame and a lid for closing an aperture in said frame, said frame including a tapered, outwardly extending, floor covering underlying flange having a thickness which tapers substantially uniformly over a distance of at least 10 times the maximum thickness of the flange, wherein the frame is

rectangular and includes a pivot surface for the lid that extends parallel to and is spaced inwardly from an inner edge of the frame, said frame abutting the floor segment and having a portion thereof positioned in said opening.

¹²~~61~~. (Previously presented): An access panel as set forth in claim ¹¹~~60~~, wherein the lid has a bearing surface on an underside thereof, said bearing surface being in slideable engagement with the pivot surface so as to allow the lid to bear on and pivot about the pivot surface.

¹³~~62~~. (Previously presented): A lid for use with an outlet facilitating access for a cable through a barrier, said outlet being adapted to be seated adjacent a surface of the barrier and in communication with an opening therethrough, said lid including a latch releasably securing the lid in a closed condition relative to the outlet and a hatch that is pivotally connected to a panel of the lid for movement between an open position providing an aperture in the lid through which cable services may extend and a closed position where no such aperture is provided, the arrangement of said latch, hatch and lid panel being such that when the lid is latched and the hatch is open, neither the lid nor the hatch can be raised from a predetermined position by movement of said cable, said hatch including supporting structure configured and arranged to selectively retain said hatch in either its open position or its closed position.

¹⁴~~63~~. (Previously presented): A lid for use with an outlet facilitating access for cable services through a barrier, said outlet being adapted to be seated adjacent a surface of the barrier and in communication with a hole therethrough, said lid comprising a panel formed from a rigid structural material and an overmoulding formed from a flexible polymeric material, said overmoulding defining at least one openable hatch and forming an integral hinge joining the lid and the hatch together.

64. (Cancelled):

¹⁵~~65~~. (Previously presented): An access panel comprising a frame for insertion into an opening in a barrier, said frame defining an aperture and including an upstanding rib which extends around the aperture, said rib having a chamfered edge, said access panel including a lid for the aperture having a chamfered edge formed from a flexible material, the arrangement of said chamfered edges being such that a substantially waterproof sealing fit is provided between the lid and the upstanding rib.

66. (Cancelled):

¹⁶~~67~~. (Previously presented): An access panel for providing access through a barrier, said panel comprising:

a frame;

a lid configured and arranged for closing the frame, said lid including a hatch that is pivotally connected thereto for movement between an open position providing an aperture in the lid and a closed position where no aperture is provided; and

two or more latch supporting pillars having curved inner faces configured and arranged to support the hatch in its open position and thereby define an expanding trumpet-shaped aperture.

¹⁷~~68~~. (Previously presented): An access panel as set forth in claim ¹⁶~~67~~, wherein the sides of the lid are tapered inwardly to facilitate closure of the frame by the lid and sweeping aside of any carpet positioned adjacent the frame to avoid trapping of carpet when the frame is closed by the lid.

¹⁸~~69~~. (Previously presented): An access panel as set forth in claim ¹⁷~~68~~, wherein the tapered sides of the lid are sloped at an angle of 30 to 45 degrees.

¹⁹
~~70~~. (Previously presented): Structure as set forth in claim ~~54~~, ~~55~~ or ~~56~~, wherein the frame includes a central, lid closable aperture and an upstanding rib which extends around said central aperture, said rib being disposed between a peripheral edge of the flange and the central aperture and being arranged and located such that the same does not project above a level down to which the pile of a carpet on the floor around the frame would crush under normal usage loads.

²⁰
~~71~~. (Previously presented): A floor structure including a floor segment, structure as set forth in claim ~~54~~, ~~55~~ or ~~56~~ wherein the frame is supported by the floor segment, and a lid for closing an aperture in said frame, wherein the materials and construction of the frame and lid are such that the load bearing capacities thereof are not substantially less than that of the floor segment.

²¹
~~72~~. (Previously presented): A floor structure including a floor segment and structure as set forth in claim ~~54~~, ~~55~~ or ~~56~~, wherein said frame is supported by the floor segment, is rectangular and is arranged and configured to define a pivot surface that extends parallel to and is spaced inwardly from an inner edge of the frame, which inner edge abuts the floor segment and defines an aperture therein.

²²
~~73~~. (Previously presented): A lid as set forth in claim ~~62~~ or ~~63~~, wherein the barrier is a floor, a wall or a desktop.

²³
~~74~~. (Previously presented): An access panel as set forth in claim ~~65~~ or ~~67~~, wherein the barrier is a floor, a wall or a desktop.